

The Governors' Commission on the Humane Treatment of Animals

Meeting Minutes
20 January, 2011

- 1) The regular meeting of the Governor's Commission on the Humane Treatment of Animals was called to order at 1:04 PM in the Attorney General's Conference Room by Chairperson Patricia Morris
- 2) **Members Present:**; Joyce Arivella, Dog Breeders Association; Joanne Bourbeau, National Humane Organizations; Sheriff Chris Conley, NH Sheriffs Association; George Cook, Sled Dog Owners Association; Mark Ellingwood, NH Fish and Game; Barry Hilton, ACO representative; Michael Hughes, Secretary and Public Member; Wendy Munroe, Animal Health Technicians Association; Maureen Pendergast, Municipal Animal Shelters; Steve Sprowl, NH Federation of Humane Organizations; Jerilee Zezula, Public; Debra Simson, NH Cat Fanciers; Patricia Morris, Chairperson and Member of the NH Bar Association; Chief Andrew Shagoury, Police Chiefs Association; Dr. Steve Crawford, State Veterinarian.
- 3) **Members Absent:**; Senator Betsi Devries, State Senator; Susan Morrell, Attorney General's Office; Rep. Carla Skinder, State Representative.
- 4) **Review of December, 2010 Minutes:** Approved as amended.
- 5) **Legislative Update:**
 - a) HB 57: This law was reviewed in committee. It concerns nuisance, violent dogs and the ownership penalties involved. It was brought up that the penalties are good as they stand. What would be more effective would be using education as a preventative for allowing dogs to get this way to begin with rather than reacting after the fact. (Joyce A.)
 - b) Proposal for Reciprocity for Veterinarians (Dr. Crawford):
 - i) For those veterinarians that received their degree outside the USA, from a school not accredited by the Veterinarian Medical Association have to take two exams: The National Competency Exam, and the Educational Equivalency Exam.
 - ii) A new test has been devised that has a shorter waiting time and is less expensive. It is called the Program for Achieving Veterinary Equivalency (PAVE). Dr. Crawford supports this and his understanding is that this proposal for reciprocity is going straight to Executive Session.
- 6) **2010 Report- Best Management Practices:** The time allotted for this section was used to fully edit the Law Enforcement Section.
 - a) Bottom-line, after an exhaustive review of this section, there was only one "Note" that needed some clarification; plus the section titled "Equine/Livestock Neglect". Dr. Crawford offered to work on these for the next meeting. The note reads:

Important Note: *In some cases, especially where many animals are involved, some animals may appear more neglected than others. Nevertheless, all the animals should be seized, if possible because the conditions in which the animals are being kept are causing the problem. And it is usually only a matter of time before the healthier ones will be in bad shape as well.*

- b) The problem being that legally all animals cannot be seized if only a few look bad. Also subjective evaluations by an ACO may not be defensible. Also, if only a few look bad, it could be due to something other than cruelty. (i.e. medical)
- c) The subsection titled "Equine/Livestock Neglect needs a closer look. Dr. Crawford volunteered to discuss this with a colleague as far as wording and jurisdiction, goes.
- d) The editing also made sure that no new terminology was introduced that conflicted, or would cause confusion with what is already defined in the RSA's.
- e) It was also noticed that there is some overlap with the Prosecution and Judicial section of this manual. This will be addressed.
- f) The jurisdictions of NH Fish and Game, USDA, local authorities will be clarified. Live stock, circus animals, other captive wild animals, and pets may have different investigation procedures.
- g) A large part of this edit was making sure that any examples cited of behaviors or cruelty, etc. were appropriate and not only opinions.
- h) A large discussion ensued whether to leave the paragraph titled "Puppy mills" intact. According to Joyce A. and Dr. Crawford, it is a common term meant to be derogatory in nature. It was suggested to lighten up on this paragraph and use the term "irresponsible breeders" instead. It was also discussed that it would be unfair to label a responsible breeder with a large number of dogs as a puppy mill owner, even though the animals might be well cared for.
- i) Dr. Crawford sees the value of defining this term somewhere in this paragraph, since this document is for law enforcement, and the term "puppy mill" comes up continuously. Also anytime the term "puppy mill" is referred to in the Manual, it will be in parentheses.
- j) The changes made were accepted, except for the sections Dr. Crawford is taking a closer look at. (mentioned above)

Meeting was adjourned at 3:07 PM

Next Meeting – 17 February, 2011 at 1 PM in the Attorney General's Conference Room, #302.

Minutes Submitted By,

Michael W. Hughes
Secretary